



Community experimentation at Nyaudzudzu Junior Primary School (Muona, Malawi)

**By Malawin lasten ja nuorten avuksi ry / Muona children and youth support
association**

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Introduction

- We are a small Finnish organization run by volunteers.
- Our organization has supported the construction of a junior primary school in Muona, Malawi.
- The school began operating in 2020.
- We continue to support the development of the school with the help of local volunteers and the community.
- More information:
<https://en.malawinlastenavuksi.com/>



Sign at the school entrance

Daily life at Nyaudzudzu

Likuni phala is served as school meal



Teacher Elizabeth Mangani

Design challenge

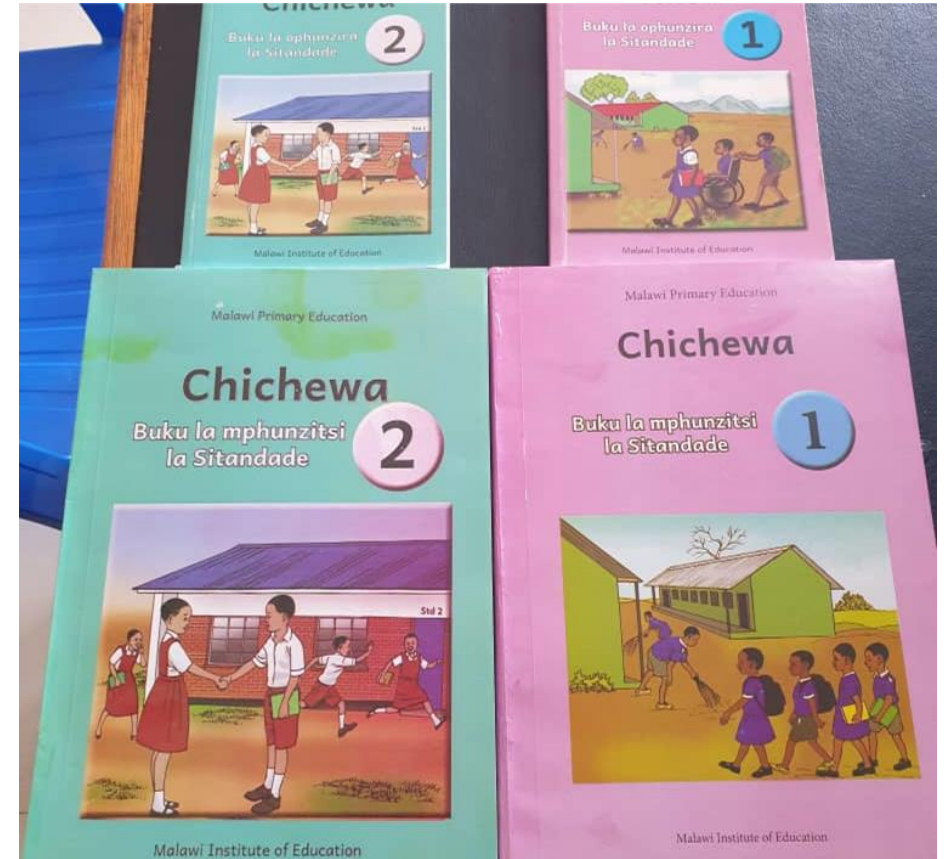
Primary education outcomes in Malawi are often poor, especially in rural schools where even basic resources are often lacking.

-> **How to create a learning environment** in our school where the whole community joins to **support every child** to achieve required standards in essential subjects?

Organizational learning goal: give local stakeholders a stronger voice with donors

Beneficiaries: Currently around 400 learners (Standards 1-5) and six teachers

Indirect: Surrounding community of 5 villages



Chichewa schoolbooks

Implementation

Project kick-off meeting held at the school 5.-6. March 2022

Invited representatives of teachers, school committees, parents and community leaders (55 total)

Aim: Identify the most important areas and goals for development.

->Prototype "Smart and Sustainable School" plan

Identified issues/needs: school books, teacher housing, school garden, teacher-parent cooperation...

Setting the scene / Research phase

Tools: Photo collection, semi-structured interview etc



Head boy Chikondi Valu presenting kick-off results

1st round of experiment

Construction of school garden

- Bricks produced locally
- Learners participate in preparing the garden and planting

Provide English and Chichewa schoolbooks to standards 1 and 2 and design activities to support the use of the books



Results

- The garden was incorporated in school lessons
- Learners committee organized to sell the vegetables to the villagers around the school
- Some money was used to buy exercise books and share them to the vulnerable learners
- Some money was used to buy vegetable seeds for the next term
- Vegetables have helped the teachers, kids and community as relish and salads for free



Working with new schoolbooks for standards 1&2



Learning to take care of textbooks and protecting them with local materials



September 2022 end of year exam results
Std1: 87 passed, 10 failed, 2 not attempted (books)
Std2: 93 passed, 8 failed, 1 not attempted (books)
Std3: 71 passed, 19 failed, 8 not attempted
Std4: 108 passed, 12 failed

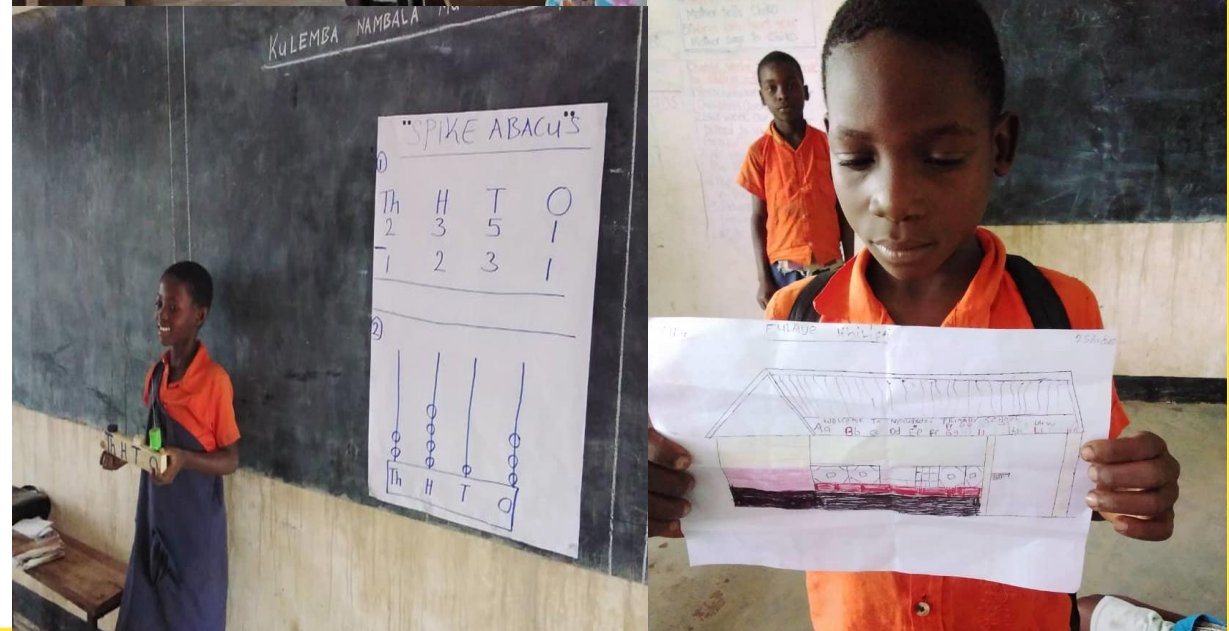
2nd round of experiment (ongoing)

- New classroom activities for teachers
- New planting of garden and fruit trees
- Exchange visit to learn about permaculture, rainwater harvesting and other activities
- Improvement of school playground
- School magazine and videos
- Train volunteers to help children to study outside school



Classroom activities

- Preparing and using teaching aids
 - one of the students is holding an abacus prepared in class
- Learning outside the classroom
- Art activities with the students
 - Student Gift Maxwell is seen holding a drawing of his school
- In-service support for teachers
 - Tr. Benson used multiple visual aids in his classroom



Results

- Highlights include learner participation in the school garden and use of the garden income to provide exercise books to vulnerable students
- Challenges: Overseas communication with a rural school lacking electricity and with a language barrier, teacher motivation and inadequate implementation of design tools on ground.
- Partial solutions: Purchase a tablet and communicate with the teachers using Whatsapp, Zoom and photos. Listen to teacher needs and provide necessary supplies, have regular meetings to follow-up

Expected end results

- Improved learning environment
- Stakeholders have a voice in school development
- Smart and sustainable school plan that could potentially be adopted by other rural schools

Collaborations/partnerships

- Nsanje education district (Manager Greystone Alindiamao)
 - Participated in project kick-off meetings
 - Suggested the development of a Community production mechanism for school meals in the future
- Traditional leaders / chiefs of the 5 surrounding villages
 - Leaders were one of our original stakeholder groups, but they have become more involved in the school development through the project
- These partnerships could also provide a way of scaling up the experiment beyond the current project

Thomas suggested the reading program in and out of school but the idea came from chief Alumenda who said comented that he was happy because one of his sons is now able to read out letters sent to his office from elsewhere

18.36



Now I came in with an idea of developing a plan for the reading program together with the teachers

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Student Malita Christopher's mother describing her experience with the project

